

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A process for continuously preparing higher (meth)acrylic esters (C) in a plant comprising a reaction apparatus and a vacuum evaporation stage for receiving a bottom product remaining after separation of a highly pure ester product, the process comprising:

transesterifying methyl(meth)acrylate (A) with a higher alcohols-alcohol (B) in the presence of a catalyst or catalyst mixture in the reaction apparatus,;

characterized in that the dividing a bottom effluent of from a the vacuum evaporation stage into a first portion and a second portion; and

(6) is divided and is fed in part to a recycling the first portion to the reaction apparatus-(1).

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): A process for continuously preparing higher (meth)acrylic esters (C) in a plant comprising a reaction apparatus and a film evaporator for separating a highly pure ester product, the process comprising:

transesterifying methyl(meth)acrylate (A) with a higher alcohols-alcohol (B) in the presence of a catalyst or catalyst mixture in the reaction apparatus,;

characterized in that the dividing a bottom effluent from a the film evaporator into a first portion and a second portion; and

(5) is divided and is fed in part recycling the first portion to the reaction apparatus-(1).

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): A process for continuously preparing higher (meth)acrylic esters (C) in a plant comprising a reaction apparatus, a film evaporator for

separating a highly pure ester product, and a vacuum evaporation stage for receiving a bottom product remaining after separation of a highly pure ester product, the process comprising:

transesterifying methyl(meth)acrylate (A) with a higher alcohols-alcohol (B) in the presence of a catalyst or catalyst mixture in the reaction apparatus;

, characterized in that the dividing a bottom effluent from the film evaporator into a first portion and a second portion;

~~(5) is divided and is fed in part recycling the first portion to the reaction apparatus;~~

~~(1) and in that the dividing a bottom effluent of the vacuum evaporation stage into a third portion and a fourth portion; and~~

~~(6) is divided and is fed recycling the third portion to the reaction apparatus-(1).~~

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): The process of claim 1, characterized in that wherein the higher alcohols-are-alcohol comprises at least one member selected from the group consisting of n-butanol, isobutanol, and 2-ethylhexanol, ~~or a combination thereof.~~

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): The process of claim 1, characterized in that wherein the catalyst used is-comprises a homogeneous catalyst.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): The process according to claim 5, characterized in that wherein the catalyst used is the comprises a titanate of the higher alcohol (B).

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): The process according to claim 1, characterized in that wherein the first portion comprises 1-95% by weight of the bottom effluent from the vacuum evaporation stage ~~(6) is fed to the reaction apparatus.~~

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): The process according to claim 7, ~~characterized in~~
~~that wherein the first portion comprises~~ 40-90% by weight of the bottom effluent from the
vacuum evaporation stage (6) ~~is fed to the reaction apparatus (1)~~.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): The process according to claim 8, ~~characterized in~~
~~that wherein the first portion comprises~~ 60-85% by weight of the bottom effluent from the
vacuum evaporation stage (6) ~~is fed to the reaction apparatus (1)~~.

Claim 10 (Currently Amended): The process according to claim 2, ~~characterized in~~
~~that wherein the first portion comprises~~ 1-95% by weight of the bottom effluent from the film
evaporator (5) ~~is fed to the reaction apparatus (1)~~.

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): The process according to claim 10, ~~characterized in~~
~~that wherein the first portion comprises~~ 40-90% by weight of the bottom effluent from the
film evaporator (5) ~~is fed to the reaction apparatus (1)~~.

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): The process according to claim 11, ~~characterized in~~
~~that wherein the first portion comprises~~ 60-85% by weight of the bottom effluent from the
film evaporator (5) ~~is fed to the reaction apparatus (1)~~.

Claim 13 (Currently Amended): The process according to claim 3, ~~characterized in~~
~~that wherein the first portion and the third portion together comprise~~ 1-95% by weight of the
~~sum of the bottom effluents from the film evaporator (5) and from the vacuum evaporation~~
~~stage (6) is fed to the reaction apparatus (1)~~.

Claim 14 (Currently Amended): The process according to claim 13, ~~characterized in that wherein the first portion and the third portion together comprise 40-90% [lacuna] by weight of the sum of the bottom effluents from the film evaporator (5) and from the vacuum evaporation stage (6) is fed to the reaction apparatus (1).~~

Claim 15 (Currently Amended): The process according to claim 14, ~~characterized in that wherein the first portion and the second portion together comprises 60-85% by weight of the sum of the bottom effluents from the film evaporator (5) and from the vacuum evaporation stage (6) is fed to the reaction apparatus (1).~~

Claim 16 (Currently Amended): The process of claim 2, ~~characterized in that wherein the higher alcohols are alcohol comprises at least one member selected from the group consisting of n-butanol, isobutanol, and 2-ethylhexanol, or a combination thereof.~~

Claim 17 (Currently Amended): The process of claim 3, ~~characterized in that wherein the higher alcohols used are alcohol comprises at least one member selected from the group consisting of n-butanol, isobutanol, and 2-ethylhexanol, or a combination thereof.~~

Claim 18 (Currently Amended): The process of claim 2, ~~characterized in that wherein the catalyst used is comprises a homogeneous catalyst.~~

Claim 19 (Currently Amended): The process of claim 3, ~~characterized in that wherein the catalyst used is comprises a homogeneous catalyst.~~